

QUESTION (f).—What estimated Government expenditure would be involved by giving effect to the Committee's recommendations regarding questions (a), (c), (d), and (e) above?

As in the opinion of the Board the time has not arrived for the establishment of one great School of Agriculture, the question of the cost has not been considered in detail, but from the evidence submitted by expert witnesses the Board estimated that it would be considerable, possibly involving a capital outlay of £250,000 for land, buildings, and equipment, besides a large annual expenditure for salaries, maintenance, and other incidentals. The Board recommends that when the number of students offering is sufficiently large this work should be undertaken.

In the meantime, if the Board's recommendations relative to the provision of class-rooms and laboratories at Wallaceville for the Victoria College agricultural students are carried out, we think that a sum of £15,000 would be required for this purpose, apart from the expenditure which would be incurred by the Department of Agriculture in providing for the transfer of its Biological and Chemical Laboratories to Wallaceville.

As regards the needs of Canterbury Agricultural College, we are of opinion that a sum of £20,000 should be provided to bring it up to the standard of modern requirements, in accordance with the Board's recommendations above.

The question of expenditure in Auckland in the matter of laboratory buildings and equipment must remain for future consideration when the school is in existence.

As regards Farm Training Colleges, the immediate needs at Ruakura are dealt with in the special report furnished by Mr. La Trobe and appended hereto. The cost of the necessary buildings and equipment is estimated at £2,100.

At Penrose the necessary additional buildings immediately required are estimated to cost £7,000, the details of which will be provided later.

The remaining portion of the Board's report deals with matters directly related to agricultural education on which the Board desires to express its opinions, although these matters were not explicitly included in the order of reference.

1. TRAVELLING SCHOLARSHIPS.

In regard to post-graduate training in agriculture, the Board, besides recommending that provision should be made at one or more of the University Colleges for the training of research students in connection with agriculture, also recommends that the Government should provide for one agricultural travelling scholarship each year, tenable for two years, to enable post-graduate students to travel abroad in order to obtain further education in agricultural science.

2. ENDOWMENTS.

The value of endowments of land was brought forcibly before the Board on several occasions. For example, the Wesleyan Church in Auckland has been able to purchase a farm of 700 acres of land, to spend £23,000 on buildings, and to start a very successful and well-managed farm boarding-school thirty miles out of Auckland, on an endowment which was originally of little value, but is now worth some £250,000. In fifty years' time there will certainly be Agricultural Colleges attached to all the Universities in New Zealand, and of 100,000 acres of land of little present value, such as the Hautu Block in the centre of the North Island, were set aside as an endowment for agricultural education, the examples we have before us warrant the expectation that the income from such lands would ultimately go far towards meeting the expenses and upkeep of the Agricultural Colleges. Lincoln College itself is the result of the far-sighted policy adopted by the public men of Canterbury when under the Provincial Government they set aside lands to provide the wherewithal for an Agricultural College.

3. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WORK.

The evidence showed that when the instructors under the Department of Agriculture were able to get into close touch with the farmer and to gain his confidence the demand for instruction was insistent, and the instructors were unable to cover the large districts allotted to them. Many witnesses testified to the value of short winter courses conducted at State farms or other centres by the trained officers of the Department, and to the excellent use which is made of the winter short course in various branches of agriculture on other countries, such as the United Kingdom, Denmark, Holland, Canada, and the United States of America. The Board therefore recommends that provision should be made at suitable centres, including Farm Training Colleges, for winter short courses, to give an opportunity to farmers to further their education, and that the number of instructors in agriculture be increased in both Islands, provided that new appointees should have taken the B.Sc. or B.Ag. degree.

4. BOYS' AND GIRLS' AGRICULTURAL CLUBS.

It was shown in evidence that whatever boys' and girls' clubs were properly organized they greatly helped to awaken the interest of both parents and children in agricultural education. It was clear, however, that such clubs should be organized by experts, and that if the work devolved on the instructors in agriculture it would occupy more time than they could spare from their other duties. The Board therefore recommends that the movement be encouraged, and that the Government should appoint an officer to organize the clubs. The Board also suggests that agricultural bursaries might be awarded to boys distinguishing themselves in the competitions arranged by the clubs.